

# NAT LOFTHOUSE



**GOLDEN JUBILEE**



1939



1989

**OFFICIAL SOUVENIR PROGRAMME**

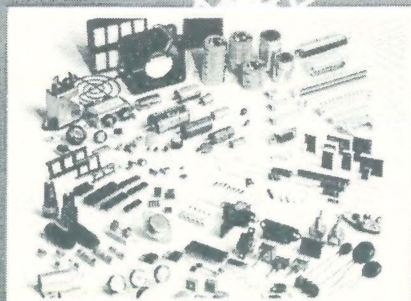
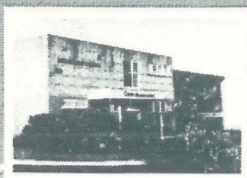
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# Nat's Golden Years



**S**eptember 4, 1989 marks the 50th anniversary of the day Nat Lofthouse signed for Bolton Wanderers Football Club.

Since that day he has been a devoted "Wanderer" – as a player, trainer, coach, manager, scout and latterly as executive club manager and President.

He played 15 years in the First Division as one of the most famous and feared of all centre-forwards, winning 33 England caps in eight years of glorious international service.

This year, after 50 years' service to football, which has made him Bolton's No 1 sporting son and one of the game's great ambassadors, Nat Lofthouse – the Lion of Vienna – celebrates his Golden Jubilee.

The following pages tell the Nat Lofthouse story in pictures and in the words of the people who remember and respect him as a player for club and for country and those who know him as a loyal and devoted servant to football and to Bolton Wanderers Football Club.



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*All photographs are used courtesy of the Bolton Evening News.*

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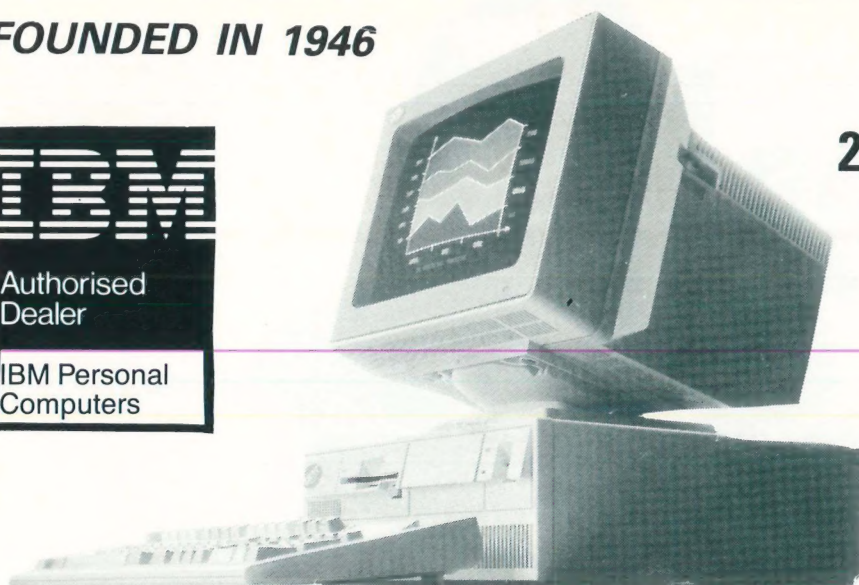
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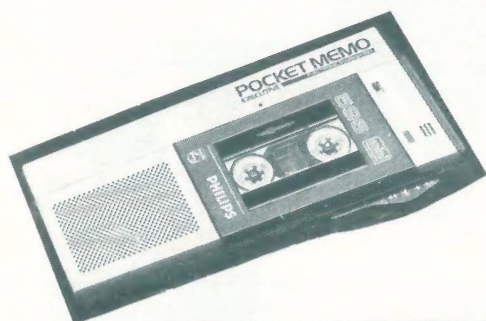
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FOREWARD

by SIR STANLEY MATTHEWS

# The pride of Bolton

**N**AT Lofthouse was one of those good, old-fashioned centre forwards you always wanted in your team. He would give everything he had in every game he played and was not just good with his head but with his feet.

One of the most striking things about him was that he was always enthusiastic in the dressing room. Even if you were losing at half time he was the first to encourage the team during the interval, determined to keep morale high for the second half.

He was a great servant to Bolton Wanderers but was also a magnificent international and his England record speaks for itself.

He was always a thorn in our side whenever I played against him during our days as rivals in the First Division. And one of my greatest memories of Nat was playing against him in the

1953 FA Cup Final. I was on the winning side that day while Nat, despite his obvious disappointment – he never enjoyed losing – was a sporting opponent in every sense of the word. The fact is that he was always a perfect gentleman on the field – very hard, but very fair – and a perfect ambassador for the game in everything he did.

I am so delighted to have been asked to write this foreward for Nat's Golden Jubilee celebrations and on behalf of all his friends, former team mates and opponents, I wish to salute Nat Lofthouse – Pride of Bolton Wanderers and England.

**Stanley  
Matthews**



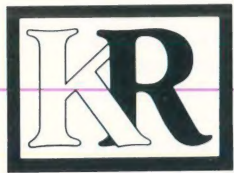
● TOGETHER again – Nat Lofthouse is joined by his great friends from that famous 1953 FA Cup Final, Blackpool's Stan Matthews and Jackie Mudie.



***Congratulations  
and best wishes***

**Nat**

***in your Golden  
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on your Golden Jubilee**



# Nat Lofthouse

## Bolton's

### ambassador



NORMAN Boardman, chairman of the Nat Lofthouse Testimonial Committee.

**I**T was with some pleasure that, some months ago, I accepted Nat's invitation to act as chairman of his Golden Jubilee Committee.

I say this because having been an admirer for almost a lifetime and close friend for many years, I felt it would be an honour to officiate.

One would not pass these comments about many men, but I do feel that he has been an ambassador for Bolton the like of which we shall not see again.

His record for Bolton Wanderers Football Club and England are such that, after thirty years since he last played, on my travels to this day, anyone discovering I am from Bolton says, "How's Nat Lofthouse these days?"

An early contact I had with him was, I think in 1953, when as a member of a club with financial problems I asked him to present prizes in an effort to fill the club. He accepted and the club was packed. When I asked, somewhat apprehensively, "How much?" his reply was "I'll do it for nowt!"

We've been friends ever since.

His love of Bolton Wanderers Football Club is well known and I can assure you that one place NOT to be with Nat is on a Saturday evening if the Wanderers have drawn at home or lost anywhere.

On behalf of the Committee I must thank all the Sponsors for their support and the directors of Bolton Wanderers Football Club for the granting of this Golden Jubilee Year in recognition of Nat's wonderful service to the club over the last half century.

In conclusion, I hope that football generally and the town of Bolton will support fully the events being arranged during 1989.

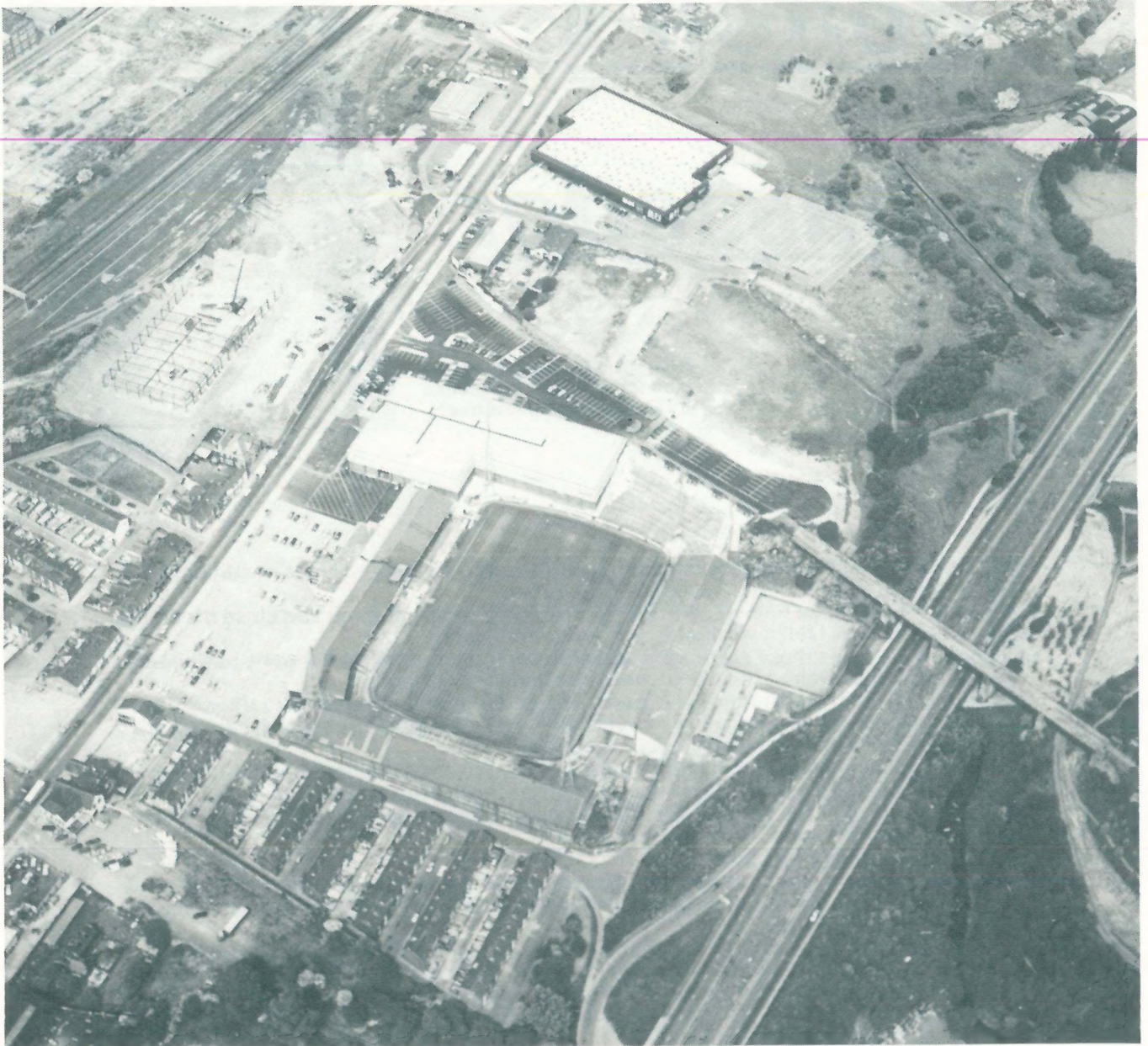
**Norman  
Boardman**





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# **CONGRATULATIONS NAT**



## **FROM ALL OF US IN BOLTON**



# Nat's love affair with Bolton Wanderers

**I** often wonder if a former Mayor of Bolton, the late Alderman J. Entwistle – a director of Bolton Wanderers and chairman of the Club in 1953 – realised what he was doing when he offered the 14 years old Nat Lofthouse a trial on the Burnden Park groundstaff in September 1939.

Or whether the team manager Mr Walter Rowley saw something so special that, despite the thousand and one problems caused by the outbreak of war, he took the precaution of signing Nat on amateur forms before Bolton Wanderers disbanded for the duration.

Whether they did or not we all have cause to thank them for their foresight.

Their actions brought to Burnden Park a true Bolton lad who, in the past 50 years, has brought nothing but credit to the town, his town club and England.

Nat Lofthouse has had a half century love affair with Bolton Wanderers and, in return, the supporters of the club have loved him for it.

Like you I have been a Lofthouse fan for many years and am delighted that I can count him among my friends. During my term as Chairman of Bolton Wanderers I was fortunate to have had Nat as President, a role ideally suited to a man who has devoted his working life to our famous club.

I know you will not hesitate to demonstrate your appreciation for Bolton's most famous sporting son.

**Barry Chaytow**

● **NAT and the thing he did best – heading for goal. His former teammate Doug Holden reckoned he had never seen anyone, before or since, head a ball with so much power.**







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# *I'm pleased to call him a true friend*

**I** first met Nat Lofthouse in 1942 whilst in the Army "guesting" for Bolton Wanderers v Burnley at Turf Moor – a match which Bolton won 4-1 with Nat scoring two. It was obvious that a lot more was going to be seen and heard of this young man – and how true that was to prove.

Nat has played the whole of his career with his one and only club – Bolton, and was, of course, a local born lad. He has scored over two hundred goals in League football and represented England on some 33 occasions and scored 30 goals. Quite a record to be proud of.

Bolton and Preston have clashed on many occasions and had some memorable games, fiercely contested but always fairly and Nat was always a player who was feared and respected for his outstanding qualities in heading, shooting and bravery. He has served the game with distinction and I have so many happy memories of him, both on and off the field both home and abroad. He is remembered by football followers everywhere with affection, because he always remained the same modest, unassuming fellow as we know him – and tremendously loyal to his club and country.

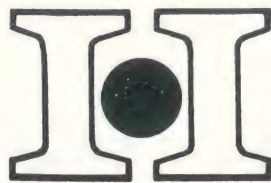
I am delighted he has been granted a testimonial and I am pleased I was asked to write a contribution to Nat's unselfish devotion and outstanding contribution to our national game and in particular to his home town Bolton. I am pleased to call him a true friend.

**Tom  
Finney**

● TWO 'Greats' of football – our Nat and his Preston North End hero, Tom Finney.







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● **THAT Wembley incident – Was it as foul? Yes says Nat. 'In fact I would probably have been sent off today', he says.**

## ***Each night I said a prayer to get even***



**T**HERE might be just one incident involving Nat Lofthouse and myself which holds the public eye – but I had many a clash with the dirty, old so-and-so from the day I first clapped eyes on him as a raw young 17-year-old.

My recollection of that first meeting is quite vivid. I had the proud pleasure, at least I thought it was going to be a pleasure, of being selected for the Irish League to play the Football League.

I remember the English forward line that day was Tom Finney, Stan Pearson, a fellow called Lofthouse, Ivor Broadis and Jack Rowley. They broke my heart. The scoreline read Irish League 0, English League 9.

We met a few times after that, both at club and international level. I recall just before the Munich Disaster we gave Bolton a right thrashing – but that was one of the few times Manchester United got the better of the Wanderers in those days. We beat them 7-2 and Nat still says to this day that the ref gave Bolton one of their goals out of sympathy!

Then we got to Wembley in '58 and we had that little set to! We pull each others legs about it now but, really and truly, Nat knows I have never held a grudge! I can't really because I still have no idea what happened – I was the one who was clattered. Remember?

Now I used to be a very religious man, because I

prayed every night that I'd get him back before he retired.

I thought I'd missed out when I heard he had retired but I got my chance when Nat made a comeback for Bolton against United. We got in a tangle in the first half but it was nothing really. Then it was all set up in the second half. A cross came over and I saw a white shirt in the corner of my eye (I was always happy when I could see Nat – if I couldn't see him I was worried). Suddenly I hit him with everything I'd got and sent him crashing to the ground – only to see that it wasn't Nat at all but Billy McAdam, a good mate of mine.

Joking apart – and he knows I really am kidding about all that stuff – I have had nothing but the highest regard for Nat Lofthouse. As youngsters in Ireland people like Nat were the players everyone looked up to. He was part of a great era in football and was a very, very big part of the great times they had at Bolton Wanderers. It saddens me to have witnessed the downfall of Bolton Wanderers because they were, in my eyes, what football was all about in those days.

Nat was a credit to the people of Bolton and to the white shirt he wore so proudly for England.

● **HARRY GREGG**





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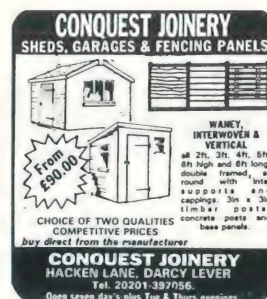
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# 'He had a heart as big as a lion'



**I** first set eyes on Nat Lofthouse when I was a small boy following the fortunes of Newcastle United and Nat was being hailed as one of England's bright new players.

He certainly impressed me then and has continued to do so over the years wherever our paths have crossed, be that as colleagues in the England side, as opponents on the field or as friends off it.

Nat always had my greatest admiration as a player. He was sensational in the air but his biggest strength was his wholehearted commitment – a quality sadly lacking in a great many players.

He had a heart as big as the Lion which has become his trademark. He loved playing football and still loves the game passionately.

Obviously I "fell out" with Nat once, but not for long, when he bundled Harry Gregg into the back of the net at Wembley and the biggest tribute I can pay is to say he was a tremendous footballer.

As a member of probably the most successful Bolton Wanderers team ever, he will constantly be held up to young players as a model and that's a high standard to aim for.

I'm delighted to have the opportunity of saying a few words in this his Golden Jubilee Year.

**Bobby  
Charlton**

## He could put thousands on the attendance

**I** MADE my League debut for Bolton Wanderers on November 5, 1960 in the same forward line as Nat Lofthouse. We beat Manchester City 3-1 and Nat and I scored a goal apiece – I got a header of all things.

I was a winger in those days and Nat, as the good, old-fashioned centre-forward was the focal point of the team. The plan was to play to Nat Lofthouse. He was a marvellous player, such a tremendous crowd puller. He scored such fabulous goals – either with his feet or his head – that he could put up to 5,000 on a gate.

Unfortunately Nat was in his final days as a player when I got into the team but we played a number of games together – often in the Reserves.

I always found him to have a great sense of humour, good to have around. He was marvellous in the dressing room – even when things weren't going so well Nat would always manage to see the funny side of things.

As well as being a great servant to Bolton Wanderers Nat was also, of course, a magnificent international player in the days when competition was much more fierce than it is today. Considering they only played five or six internationals a year, Nat's total of 33 caps was quite something. I reckon he would have doubled that score if he'd been playing today.

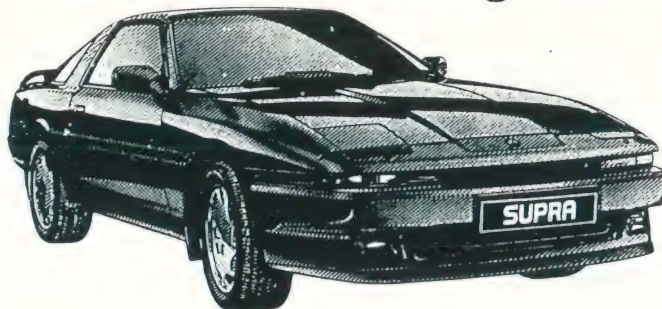
People will always remember Nat Lofthouse for his rocket shot and flying headers. And that's how I like to remember him.

Well done, Nat! Congratulations!

**Francis  
Lee**



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# He was a perfect centre-forward

**N**AT Lofthouse was everything an English centre forward should be. Strong, robust, good in the air, good on the ground and he could score goals by the bagful! He epitomised the traditional English "leader of the line"

Nat invariably had an outstanding game when playing against Manchester United, as indeed did Bolton Wanderers as a team.

The two clubs were fierce rivals during the 1950s and Nat was the very embodiment of the Trotters' determination and resolve during those days.

He of course led Bolton to their 1958 FA Cup Final triumph over United, scoring both goals in the victory that took the trophy to Burnden Park. There will always be controversy over his second goal at Wembley that day, but I prefer to let the whole affair pass into history. And anyway on the day Wanderers were deserved winners.

My very best wishes go out to Nat in the hope that the Lion of Vienna (and he wasn't dubbed with that title without good reason) enjoys a happy and successful testimonial.

**Matt  
Busby**



● IT'S 1957 and Nat and Dennis Stevens have something to celebrate – places in the England 22 for the 1958 World Cup. Looking on are a youthful Roy Hartle and Bryan Edwards.





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★ **MANAGER Bill Ridding leads out the Wanderers for the 1958 FA Cup final against Manchester United. Behind Nat are Bryan Edwards and John Higgins. BELOW: TAKE that! Nat puts the Wanderers one up after only three minutes and there's nothing keeper Harry Gregg and defender Stan Crowther can do about it.**





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★ NAT collected an FA Cup winners medal and a Charity Shield medal in 1958. The Wanderers line up is: Back row (left to right): Roy Hartle, John Higgins, Bryan Edwards, Eddie Hopkinson, Derek Hennin, Tommy Banks, Bert Sproston (trainer). Front: Brian Birch, Dennis Stevens, Nat, Bill Ridding (manager), Ray Parry, Doug Holden, Ralph Gubbins.



## ● *Nat is a Wembley hero*

★ NAT and Harry Gregg in another Wembley clash but this time the ball eludes both the United keeper and the Wanderers centre-forward.

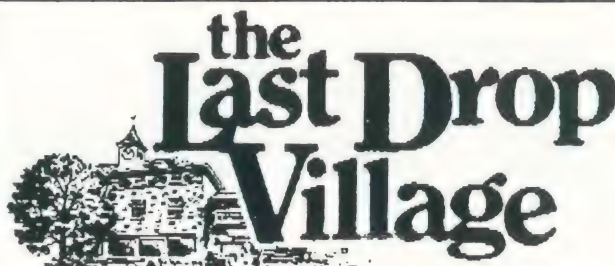


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Our England careers did overlap for a short period in the 1950s, although, regrettably, we never appeared in the same England team.

Nat won the title of "Lion of Vienna" for his gallant personal display for England against the much-vaunted Austrians, and his inspired leadership – a brace of goals – helped Bolton Wanderers to win the Cup in 1958.

A one-club man throughout his fifteen years as a professional, his name was synonymous for many years with the kind of "old-fashioned" centre-forward play so admired by other countries.

Best wishes go to you, Nat.

**Bobby Robson**

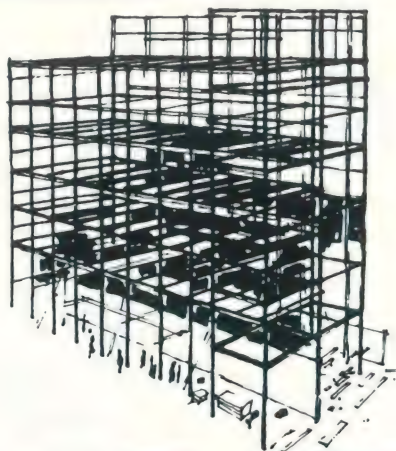


★ THE date is 1969 and Nat takes a look around the familiar, if snowy surroundings, of Burnden Park.



★ NAT with treasured momentos of the 1958 Wembley Final, his winner's medal and the matchball.





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# He was one of the best

**T**o me Nat Lofthouse was one of the best centre forwards I played against, giving 100 per cent all the time – and that was both at home and away.

Playing against him was tough. You could never let him have the slightest chance or the goal was his. His home ground, Burnden Park was a major problem. He was a real handful and for one who was not the tallest of men, he could really jump and his heading was superb and very strong.

He played the game hard and gave nothing away. he was always fair and what great tussles he and I had.

Playing for England to him was a real honour and he wore the England shirt with great pride on all



the 33 occasions he played for his country with great skill and determination.

The games I remember with Nat were the ones against Scotland, Austria, Yugoslavia and Uruguay. Against Uruguay in Montevideo we lost 2-1, but he led his line with great courage as it was a real hard game with lots of hard tackles which he never shirked at all.

In the match against Yugoslavia at Highbury, a 2-2 draw, he got two vital goals against one of the toughest defences in Europe. But it was against our old rivals Scotland at Wembley, which we won 7-2 – Nat got three of them and my colleague Dennis Wilshaw of Wolves got four – that Nat's rejoicing proved to be one of the most memorable occasions of our England days together.

Nat, though, will always be remembered (quite rightly so) for the match against Austria in Vienna where we won 3-2.

It was touch and go all the time but it was Nat who got the greatest goal for us, running from the halfway line, being tackled all the way. But his strength took him to the goalkeeper and he slipped the ball into the net for a great victory.

That was Nat's greatest moment and England's and being skipper made me feel so proud – as all the British soldiers in the crowd agreed.

They do not make them like Nat Lofthouse any more – no more Lions of Vienna.

**Billy  
Wright**

● NAT off duty. Top right getting down to some cleaning work and making a few telephone enquiries with the Wanderers boss Bill Ridding.





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# *The day when the Lion roared*

**I** recall with pride and pleasure the day we did up the Austrians. We played in the Russian zone and the old Ruskies were appropriately red in the face laughing at the antics of the rival fans.

With minutes to go the score was 2-2. The Austrians were pounding away like Wellington's troops at Waterloo. The ball was thrown out to, I think, Tom Finney. A quick slip and the ball was through to Nat, who made up a population of two in the Austrian half.

Nat thundered upfield, roared on by the English fans. The goalkeeper came raging forward and it was quite clear he was going to clobber Nat.

Fearless Lofthouse stayed until the last second to score with a typical power shot.

Then... crash! In went the ball and out went Nat.

Trainers rushed on to stretcher Nat off the field. At the touchline the bold Nat lept off the stretcher to play out the last five minutes.

★ **DESMOND Hackett** was a sports journalist covering the Austria v England game and the man who penned the description of Nat as 'The Lion of Vienna'.

Match over and the khaki-clad British troops, in their hundreds, poured onto the pitch to carry off the red-shirted English. It looked like a mass of poppies waving in a Flanders field of corn.

The old eyes dim at the thought of that moving British sports scene. And I often think of the rugged Austrians: "That will teach them not to try to twist the lion's tail."

Give young Nat my undying admiration and tell him: "Lofthouse, England has need of thee at this hour."

**Desmond Hackett**



★ **THE Austrians** are on the retreat as Nat strikes his first goal – with his left foot. 'I used to think that my left peg was only for standing on', says Nat.



# Lion



● THE drama of Vienna as Austrian goalkeeper Musil races out to meet Nat, who is clear of the defence and heading for goal.



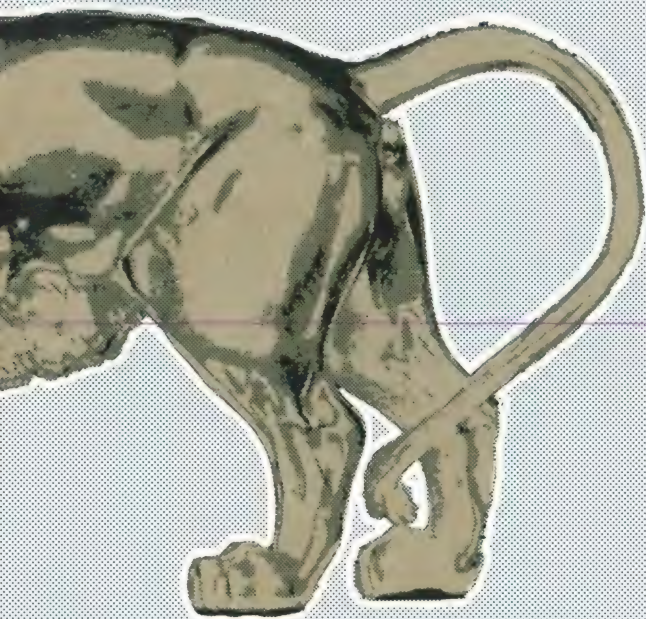
● IT'S the stuff dreams are made of. The smile on the face of this cheering 'Tommy' says it all – Lofthouse is England's hero.



● THE agony is etched on the face of the goalkeeper. But there are helpers. Jack Froggatt help carry their w



# of Vienna



of Nat Lofthouse after the collision with  
g hands as team mates Tom Finney and  
unded team mate off the pitch.



● **CRASH** – Nat and Musil collide  
in a blur of bodies, but the ball is  
on its way into the Austrian goal  
for a dramatic winner.



● **ENGLAND'S** hero lies injured  
while half back Jack Froggatt  
administers some helpful and  
much needed first aid.





★ IT'S 1953, the FA Cup Final at Wembley, but Wanderers were deemed to be disappointed. Here he sees his shot hit the post before Wanderers eventually went down 4-3 against Blackpool.



★ THE Wanderers line-up in 1953.



★ WANDERERS 1953 squad – Back row: Bert Sprostron (trainer), Nat Lofthouse, Johnny Wheeler, John Higgins, Stan Hanson, Malcolm Barrass, Ray Parry, Tommy Neill, Bill Ridding. Middle row: Eric Bell, George Higgins, Willie Moir, Ronnie Codd, Harold Hassall, Johnny Ball. Front row: Alan Beards and Ralph Gubbins.



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● CUP delight as Nat and manager Bill Ridding celebrate after the 1958 Cup win.



★ FRONT page news as the Wanderers 1958 FA Cup Final win over Manchester United is reported in the Bolton Evening News sports paper, The Buff.

★ A NEW career. Nat becomes the manager of the Wanderers. Here he is congratulated by chairman Harry Tyldesley. Among the players in the group are Gareth Williams, Eddie Hopkinson, Freddie Hill, John Ritson, Dave Hatton, Terry Wharton and Paul Fletcher.





# Congratulations

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# *Lofty would still score goals today*

**T**HE first time I met Nat Lofthouse was the day I signed for Bolton Wanderers as a schoolboy, just turned 15. I'd never seen him play but I knew enough about the man who was there with Jimmy Armfield that day.

I'd heard all about the player they called the Lion of Vienna and since then I'm delighted to say that I have got to know him and to respect him as a really nice fella.

I remember watching him when I was a young player. He didn't have anything to do with the team in those days but he used to come into the dressing room, lay a towel on the floor and do half an hour, maybe threequarters some days, working out. I already knew that I'd have to be dedicated and work hard to stay in the game but I used to watch a fella of his age still working out and I realised just how dedicated he must have been as a player. He was fantastic.

All the lads nowadays respect Nat's record as a player. He was one of the greats in his day – scoring all those goals for England and the Wanderers. Some people say the game's different now but I'll tell you what – I'm sure he'd score just as many goals now. If you could put a modern day fee on his head it would be frightening – I wouldn't like to have to find the money.

That's why the players today are prepared to do anything they can to honour Nat. We never saw him play but we've all read the books and seen the films – especially that incident with Harry Gregg – and the lads have jumped at the chance to be part of his Jubilee.

That speaks volumes for the lad. He's been a great ambassador for the game and for Bolton Wanderers – a fabulous club. Wherever you go the name Nat Lofthouse is synonymous with Bolton – and I'm just delighted to have known him for so long and to know that his service to the game is being honoured this year.

**Peter Reid**





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to Nat for  
the future*

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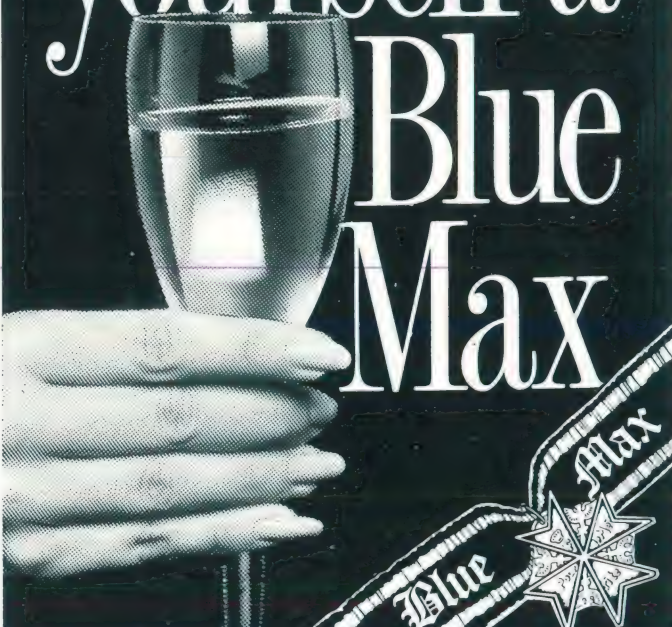
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# ***Loyalty is the name of the game***



**I**t gives me great pleasure to pay tribute to a man who has shown tremendous loyalty to one club – Bolton Wanderers – for 50 smashing years.

I would go so far as to suggest that Nat's achievement is one which is without parallel and I can say with some certainty that, because of the way football is structured these days, that it will never be matched in the future.

But Nat's service to football has not only been confined to just Bolton Wanderers and obviously, having worn the England shirt on many occasions myself, I can recognise a man who wore the nation's colours with great pride. My feelings are that if our future footballers were to feel the same then our national teams would do very well indeed.

My first memory of seeing Nat Lofthouse was that famous incident in the 1958 Cup Final when he barged Harry Gregg into the back of the net. As a young kid growing into the world of football it was one of the first games I saw on TV. I remember the day very well because my mum, for no special

**IT'S 1958 and the Cup is won. Here Nat takes the trophy down the famous 39 Wembley steps, followed by Bryan Edwards, John Higgins and Eddie Hopkinson.**

reason as it turned out, had a particular fancy for Manchester United and she was quite annoyed, to say the least. She's met Nat since and, I'm pleased to say, she thinks he is a charming man.

Nat Lofthouse is a great ambassador for Bolton Wanderers Football Club. He still works hard for the club and still creates the atmosphere he always has done down the years - whatever job he has held.

I am sure Nat must be a little saddened when he compares the present with the past. Yet he continues to work his heart out to help try to create a successful tomorrow.

**Phil  
Neal**



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# Lofty's all-star England team

★ IN his 50 years in the game Nat Lofthouse has played against, teamed up with and latterly watched the best players in the world. Here he gives an insight into the players he regards as England's finest – Nat's 'All-time England Select.'

**I**"LET'S take the forward line first. It was the department I knew better than any other and I've no doubts whatsoever of the five men I would pin my hopes on in my England attack:

**Matthews, Mannion, Lawton, Carter, Finney.**

My centre half would be Neil Franklin with left half Jimmy Dickinson and right half Joe Mercer.

At full-back there's no question about it – Ramsey on the right

and Bill Eckersley on the left.

And in goal it would have to be Gordon Banks – the only one of the eleven I didn't



● JIMMY Dickinson – ever reliable



● GORDON Banks – edged out Frank Swift.

play either with or against during my career.

Now I know my team would not necessarily be everyone's cup of tea but I've chosen each and every player for a particular reason that made him something special in his own right or special in my eyes.

Take Neil Franklin, for instance. Stoke City's cultured centre half. Stan Cullis of Wolves would have

run him very close in my opinion, but I plump for Neil because I simply hated playing against him. Both Neil and Stan were classy players, far too classy for my liking as an opponent, but Neil in particular used to make my life a misery – he never gave me a kick and I always admired him for that.

Mercer was classy too. I'd go for Joe at right half rather than Billy Wright for

**Continued on Page 45**





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**Nat's  
choice**

● **ALF Ramsey** – so confident

# Ramsey was so cultured

that behind you – and I think I'd have to go for Gordon Banks just ahead of Frank Swift, both great goalkeepers – the forwards could be left to concentrate on their own jobs without any real worries. And I reckon my all-time England forward line

would hold its own in any company.

Raich Carter with that lethal left foot of his; Wilf Mannion would be the brains of the attack; and Tommy Lawton – 6ft 1ins, good in the air and good on the ground.

And the wingers?

**Continued from Page 43**

instance because I recall always doing well against Billy. It was just one of those things. He was a great England captain and a member of a magnificent Wolves team but I always seemed to have a good game against him. As for Joe – he really was something special.

Jimmy Dickinson, Portsmouth's very own, never had a bad game. He was ever-reliable. If Walter Winterbottom wanted a marking job doing on an opponent, he always knew he could rely on Jimmy, who did the sort of job Nobby Stiles did for Alf Ramsey in later years – only better.

Blackburn's Bill Eckersley was only small but what a belting little left back he was. And Ramsey

himself – well he showed England manager potential right back in his playing days.

Ramsey was so cultured and confident that he not only had his own game all tied up but he could come into the dressing room at half time and tell everybody else what they were doing wrong as well – and it often paid handsome dividends.

I remember playing for England against Austria at Wembley in 1951. At half time Alf came off and ran through a particular free kick they'd worked on at Spurs. We used it in the second half and it worked. I was fortunate to score England's equaliser from it and we came away with a 2-2 draw.

With players like

**Continued on Page 47**



● **TOMMY Lawton** – brave and daring



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# Finney was the tops every time

Continued from Page 45

Well, they'd have to be Matthews and Finney.

But here is where I would differ from many people. Matthews had the magic, there is no doubt, and with the ball he could be quite devastating. Even so, whenever I am asked to name the greatest of them all it's got to be Finney every time.

Matthews was a magnificent individual while Finney was more the team player. He would always be prepared to work for the ball, was amazingly versatile and could score goals as well as make them. But what a pair!

Two names I must add to my all-time



**Nat's  
choice**

● TOM Finney – simply the best.



● STANLEY Matthews – dazzling displays

England list were young boys lost to us so tragically at Munich.

Tommy Taylor would surely have been England's greatest ever centre-forward – by a mile – if he had lived to develop the terrific skills he had as a youngster with Manchester United and England.

And Duncan Edwards was without doubt one of the best players ever to wear an England shirt. The only reason I haven't gone for big Duncan in my team is that you'd be at a loss where to play him. He was simply brilliant in any position. You could put him in anywhere –

but however difficult your dilemma, you'd make damn sure you put him in somewhere.

If tragedy had not struck in 1958 Tommy Taylor and Duncan Edwards would have stood out like beacons for many, many great years in the England team."







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● ENGLAND action as Nat charges in on the Russian goal in a Wembley international

## Always the hero

**N**AT Lofthouse was probably the main reason why as a youngster, born and brought up in Ashton-under-Lyne, I chose to sign for Bolton Wanderers when I had the chance of going to other clubs such as Manchester United, Arsenal and Preston.

I had always supported Bolton because my father was a friend of George Taylor's – the Bolton coach – and I can recall the first football match I saw was the 1953 FA Cup Final on television. At the time I must have been one of the few people outside Bolton who regretted Blackpool winning that final. I was pleased for Stanley Matthews, who finally got his Cup winners medal, but I desperately wanted Bolton to win.

Then came my first live game – it was in the mid-50s and my dad took me to Burnden Park to see Bolton play Portsmouth in the days of Jimmy Dickinson. I remember him lifting me over the turnstile because the turnstile operator thought the weather was so bad that the game would probably be called off. My dad said the game would be played because the Wanderers liked it good and wet – and so it proved. Bolton won 6–1 and 'Lofty', who was now my hero, rose like an eagle to stick a couple of goals in.

From that time on I was committed to Bolton. I saw all the games in the 1958 Cup run and I still have the photograph of Nat that he signed for me that year. I didn't know it then but my idol was later to become instrumental in my career.

The first day I went to Bolton I was in the cafe

opposite the ground and bumped into this young blond haired lad. He said the Bolton team wasn't so good and even though he'd only just signed he'd be playing in the first team that same year. It was 1960 and the lad was Francis Lee – and he did play that season in the same forward line as Nat.

Lofty looked after the Reserves when he finished playing and once I'd graduated from the 'B' team to that level I discovered what a great influence he was on younger players. He was great for team spirit and always kept us entertained with his tales of tours abroad with Bolton and England.

When I left Bolton in 1970 Nat was manager and he was the one who sold me. But I knew at the time that I was being sold to Birmingham for financial reasons. I remember Bert Sproston the physio saying he was sorry I was leaving but that his wife would be glad because they'd get their Christmas turkey off the club that year!

I'm sure every football fan will be aware, as I am, of the great contribution Nat Lofthouse has made to Bolton Wanderers and to football. The nickname typifies the man – he played the game with a lion heart, he was a tremendous leader and you always felt he was prepared to go through a brick wall for Bolton.

Nat will always have a special place in football's hall of fame. he will never be forgotten. I'd just like to think England had him available now.

I hope that this year brings back many happy memories for Nat and for the people of Bolton.

**Gordon  
Taylor**



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# *Tireless worker for Bolton Wanderers*

**T**O many football fans Nat Lofthouse is not of Bolton Wanderers, he IS Bolton Wanderers. Nobody better personifies the proud traditions of the Wanderers or the town of Bolton itself.

He became known as the Lion of Vienna after scoring what he described as his greatest goal against Austria in 1952.

When the Wanderers had the FA Cup snatched from their grasp by Blackpool's remarkable recovery in 1953, Nat and his colleagues swallowed their bitter disappointment and were first to congratulate their opponents.

In 1958 Nat Lofthouse was instrumental in the

defeat of Manchester United, incidentally the first Cup Final I attended.

Since injury forced his retirement from the game in 1960, Nat has served Bolton Wanderers in almost every conceivable capacity. He remains a tireless worker for the club whether it be by fundraising behind the scenes or spearheading an anti-hooligan campaign from the front line. The £10 Wanderers paid to Nat in return for his signature as a young professional was the best £10 ever spent.

Good luck for your testimonial, Lofty! Nobody deserves it more.

**Graham  
Kelly**

● WILLIE Moir, Wanderers skipper in the 1953 Final at the Town Hall reception after the match with young Nat and his playing colleagues listening on.





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50 YRS NAT**



# Cup magic from Nat and the boys



● WE'VE won the Cup and there's no hiding the delight of Nat and his Wanderers team-mates after their 1958 2-0 Wembley win over Manchester United. From left: Brian Birch, Eddie Hopkinson and Derek Hennin.



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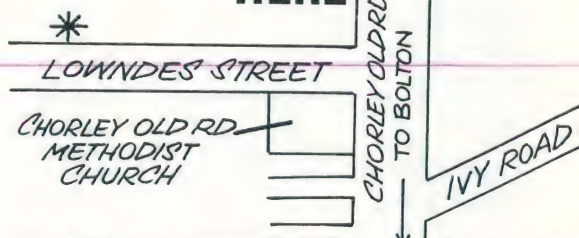
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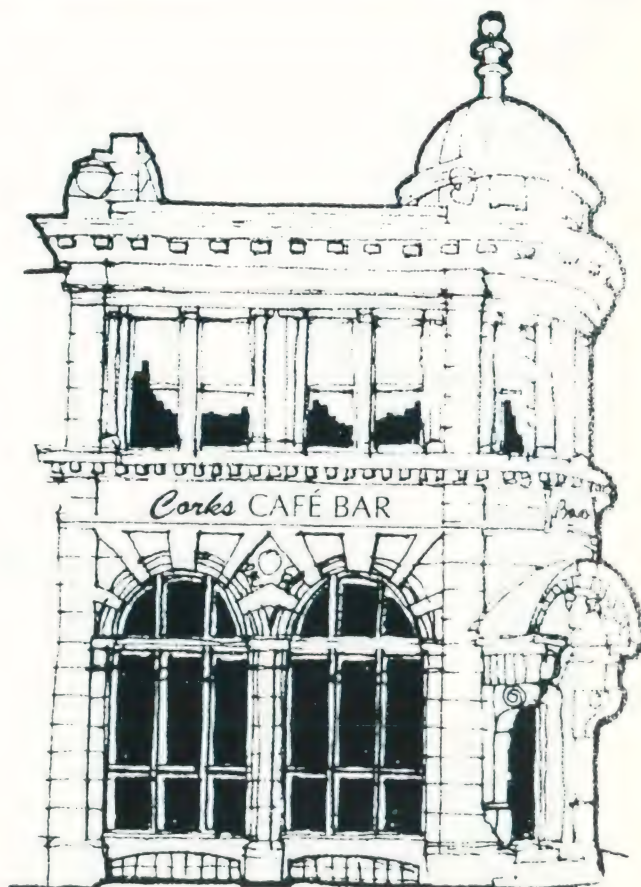
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# Forever proud to play for England



**I**n his day as a player Nat Lofthouse epitomised the best in character of English football. His cheerful spirit and determined optimism could uplift a team.

He was a traditional centre forward of that period – hard working and robust in the chase and the challenge for the ball, and ever seeking opportunities, as he used to say, to “have a go” at goal.

Whenever he played for England we somehow expected him to score, but even when he didn't you would always see him playing heart and soul to the last whistle.

At that time international competition for senior national teams was confined to the World Cup so that we had to gain experience against foreign teams by making short tours at the end of each season, taking in the best opposition in Europe and South America.

In 1952 we had planned three matches in Italy, Austria and Switzerland. Though we managed to draw 1–1 against Italy, there were great fears amongst the press followers that we would be trounced by the Austrian team who were in great form. I recall the British soldiers in Vienna swarming round our coach on arrival at the ground pleading: “Don't let us down lads”.

This was to be one of Nat's greatest achievements for England. Nat had played like a Trojan and had already scored one of England's goals to hold the score level at 2–2. The game was getting tough when Nat suddenly burst from the centre circle in a solo run, evading two opponents to reach the penalty area.

As the goalkeeper collided heavily with Nat he

steered the ball into the net, suffering an ugly gash on his shin.

This gave us a remarkable victory and hundreds of soldiers ran onto the field at the end of play to greet their heroes.

No wonder next day the headlines acclaimed Nat as “Lofthouse, Lion of Vienna.”

Even when Nat was not in the side he remained an inspiration. As reserve for the match against the World Cup winners West Germany in Berlin, Nat cheerfully encouraged Tommy Taylor and filled the other players with his stout optimism.

Shortly after the Munich disaster the selectors recalled Nat for the prestige game against Russia at Wembley. This was a glamorous swan song as Nat again delighted the crowd with his energetic attacks on goal until he finally scored. We beat the Russians 5–0 and with typical chivalry at the end of the game Nat linked arms with the Russian goalkeeper as they walked off the field.

At the end of his playing career Nat attended a course for would-be coaches at Lilleshall to which I had invited Gustav Sebes, the famous Hungarian team manager. We organised a team game so that Gustav could show us the Hungarian system of rotating positions during play. Gustav expressed openly his admiration for Nat for the enthusiastic way he co-operated in this demonstration.

Nat's loyalty and service to Bolton Wanderers and his outstanding games for his club and England have made him a legendary “great” of English football.

**Walter  
Winterbottom**



● MAN of the people – Nat addresses the Wanderers fans during the civic reception to honour the 1958 Wembley win.



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# Nat Lofthouse – A Profile



Born Bolton, August 27, 1925.

September 4, 1939 – Joined Bolton Wanderers ground staff.

March 22, 1941 – Bolton debut v Bury (scored twice in 5-1 win).

August 31, 1946 – League debut v Chelsea (scored twice in 4-3 defeat).

November 22, 1950 – England debut v Yugoslavia at Highbury (scored twice in 2-2 draw).

May 25, 1952 – Earned "Lion of Vienna" legend, scoring twice in Austria.

Sept 24, 1952 – Scored a record six goals for Football League v Irish League.

April 1953 – Named Footballer of the Year.

May 2, 1953 – Scored in 4-3 FA Cup Final defeat by Blackpool, having topped the First Division goalscorers with 30.

May 20, 1956 – Broke Steve Bloomer's England scoring record in Finland.

May 3, 1958 – Captain and two-goal hero of Bolton's FA Cup Final triumph over Manchester United.

November 26, 1958 – Final England appearance (v Wales at Villa Park).

January 1960 – Retired from game with an ankle injury.

December 17, 1960 – Suffered knee injury in final League appearance at Birmingham after short comeback bid.

July 10, 1961 – Appointed assistant trainer at Burnden.

June 21, 1967 – Appointed chief coach.

August 20, 1968 – Became caretaker manager.

December 18, 1968 – Appointed manager.

November 4, 1970 – Became administrative manager.

August 12, 1971 – Appointed Wanderers chief scout.

November 20, 1978 – Returned to Burnden after six-year absence as executive club manager.

December 6, 1985 – Accepted caretaker manager's job for second time, aged 60.

October 30, 1986 – Appointed president of the club.



● IN 21 years as a player with Bolton Wanderers, Nat Lofthouse represented the club in 660 games and scored 441 goals. He played 452 League games, scoring 255 goals, plus 53 Cup appearances, adding a further 30 goals.

As an England international he won 33 caps – including two in the 1954 World Cup in Switzerland – and scored 30 goals.

Thirteen appearances for the Football League netted a further 21 goals, including a record six goals against the Irish League at Wolves in September 1952.



# Thanks – it's been a privilege and a pleasure



**I**T is hard to believe that it's 50 years since I first pledged my life to Bolton Wanderers, and yet the record books show that I signed in September 4, 1939, the year, as Robb Wilton would have said, war broke out.

During the last half century I have always been aware of the special relationship, I have been privileged to enjoy with the fans of the club and the people of Bolton. To you I say a heartfelt thankyou because without your support this Golden Jubilee Year might never have happened.

To everyone within the club who, over the years have made my working life a pleasure I say thanks for your friendship, help and co-operation.

To the present Wanderers Board goes my appreciation for allowing Burnden Park to be used for my Golden Jubilee game and for their understanding when Golden Jubilee business eats into the normal working day.

And my special thanks go out to my hard-working committee, chaired by my good friend Norman Boardman, to Humphrey Swindells and his colleagues at the Bolton Evening News, who so readily took on the main sponsorship of the Year and to the many businessmen and women of Bolton who have rallied round with sponsorship and financial support.

To you all I say it's been a privilege and a pleasure.

● WE'VE won the Cup!  
Nat gets a victory hug  
from Wanderers  
manager Bill Ridding.





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